

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 16, 1976

Office of the Vice President
(New York, New York)

PRESS CONFERENCE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT
AND SENATOR BOB DOLE
12th FLOOR, PRESIDENT FORD HEADQUARTERS
545 MADISON AVENUE
NEW YORK, NEW YORK

AT 5:10 P.M. EDT

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Ladies and gentlemen, I would like to say what a thrill it is to be back here in New York to kick off the Ford-Dole campaign, a winning campaign in November. We have stopped down at five cities around the State, and it is a thrill to be here in New York at the opening of the headquarters.

I would just like to say that the Republican Party and President Ford are mighty fortunate to have as the Vice Presidential candidate on this ticket Bob Dole, who is a man --

(Applause)

-- who knows government from having been county attorney, State legislator, Congressman, a Senator, and with a war record of five years of serving his country in World War II, and a man who has not only courage and integrity but ability to speak with the forthrightness on the issues, which is of major importance at this time.

He is also a man -- and I just want to mention this -- of great compassion, a man who has been a champion of civil rights all his life, a man who has supported the food stamp program for those in need. He was a cosponsor on the McGovern-Dole bill for revision of the food stamp program to make it available to those who needed it and keep those who didn't need it off.

He is a champion of the handicapped because he is one who has also been handicapped by his own wounds in World War II. He has had a special concern for those who are handicapped.

He has been a supporter of Israel all his life in public office. He is a supporter of the American enterprise system which built this country to what it is today, a supporter of fiscal integrity. And he is a man who does not equivocate, ladies and gentlemen, and he is going to be a tremendous asset to President Ford with the experience of government in this country. And I would just like to say he is a man who has the qualities that if anything happens to the President, God forbid, to be the leader of our country.

I would like to present to you Senator Dole, the next Vice President of the United States. Bob Dole.

SENATOR DOLE: Thank you. I think before we respond to questions, -- and I am very willing to do that --

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I would also like to indicate we have had a very successful day. This is our fifth stop. I said at the last stop it indicates a number of things. It indicates that this party is working for victory in November. Second, it indicates the great importance we place on the State of New York. And, thirdly, of course, and most significantly, it indicates the willingness of Dick Rosenbaum and Vice President Rockefeller to get behind this Ford-Dole ticket. That is what we need. That is what we expected and that is what we have had all day long.

It has been a great experience for me and my wife Elizabeth. We have had a great time. It has been very exciting. We just believe that, as Dick Rosenbaum says, we are going to pass the other group. As they are going down, we are going up. That is how I will leave for Boston in a few minutes, knowing that we have had a good day.

I said to the Vice President, or he said to me -- I don't remember which -- that it feels good. There is a great deal of enthusiasm out there. We think we learn that in politics that could be disproved in November, of course, but it does feel good. It looks good, and we are going to continue to work.

QUESTION: The New York primary the other day said there were three times as many Democrats who voted as Republicans, so the odds would be against you. What are you going to tell the people of New York that is going to persuade them to vote for President Ford?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: The present poll shows the Ford-Dole ticket four points behind the Democratic ticket. It was three points behind right after the convention. Two weeks later there was only a one-point drop.

For those of us who have been around, I always used to start at about 24 percent behind, sometimes 35 percent behind. Four percent is unheard of to me. He has got seven weeks to close that gap and take this election.

And I want to tell you, things are starting up, and the response of this trip around the State was fantastic. This fellow is our kind of guy. And I want to tell you, he not only has the qualities I talked about, but he has got another asset. He has got a brilliant and beautiful wife, Elizabeth. Where did she go? She got a phone call. I don't blame her. She probably met someone along the way.

(Laughter)

She is a member of the Federal Trade Commission. She is an extraordinary woman in her own right. So this man brings assets to this ticket that are tremendous.

QUESTION: What specific secret did you offer the Senator around the trip in New York?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: He is just the man, and he responds to people and he is deeply devoted to this country and the values on which this country was built. He is a patriot. He is a man who believes in equality and opportunity for all and respect for human dignity.

That is what Americans like. It doesn't make any difference what party they belong to. I know that, and you know that, or I wouldn't have been elected four times.

QUESTION: As you are well aware, New York has always been considered a traditionally liberal kind of State. Senator Dole is considered a conservative member of the Senate. Is there any need to refurbish his image?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Just have New Yorkers understand his work. That is why I have mentioned that he has been a champion of civil rights all his life, that he was on the McGovern-Dole bill. That was a surprise even to Mr. McGovern when he was on television, questioning me at the convention. He said, "How can Jake Javits, Cliff Case and those fellows go for Bob Dole?" I said, "Look, Senator, if I remember correctly, he was a sponsor of a food stamp program." And the commentator said, "Yes. And wasn't it the McGovern-Dole bill?" McGovern said, "Yes, I guess it was. Let's skip it or they are liable to renominate Jesse Helms on the floor."

QUESTION: Do you think President Ford will implement the Republican Platform?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Well, I think President Ford is going to carry out the basic concepts of the Republican Platform relating to the domestic scene, which means we have got to make, number one, sound economic policies to reestablish the economic vigor of this country, stop inflation and create the opportunity for people to have employment in the American enterprise system, as against the Democratic Platform which comes out for programs -- 30, 40, 50, 60 of them -- which total \$200 billion, which are going to rekindle the fires of inflation, which is the most devastating tax that can be perpetrated on anybody.

On the foreign policy, this morality platform in there, as the President said, he has no objection, because these are the moral forces on the basis of which the Republican Party has conducted its foreign policy for the last eight years, and under which the world is at peace.

QUESTION: You are suggesting there are parts of that platform he does not agree on.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: There are bound to be. How can you have how many thousands of delegates, through a Platform Committee representing two candidates and having compromises and so forth, come up and expect it to represent one point of view?

With Jimmy Carter it was his platform. But the convention already knew who was going to be the candidate. That was not the case in Kansas City.

QUESTION: Does that mean a platform is somewhat meaningless?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: It doesn't mean it is meaningless. It represents the party's thinking.

QUESTION: Senator Dole, what is your opinion? Can you tell us whether you think the President can just ignore parts of the platform?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I didn't say he was going to ignore it. Those are your words, not mine.

SENATOR DOLE: As I recall, there was a very spirited race on for U. S. Senate where they had five candidates. We had two. That would bring out more voters to support their own candidates. But as the Vice President said, we have got the right ticket, and we are very optimistic about New York.

We have been talking about the platform all day long, and I don't think we have changed our positions, but apparently we keep getting different press people in who get a different view of what ours is.

QUESTION: You said it was not meaningless, but earlier you said nobody was bound by it.

SENATOR DOLE: You have been with us all day.

(Laughter)

QUESTION: You have just changed the tone somewhat. Mr. Vice President, you said it wasn't meaningless, but earlier you said nobody is bound by it.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: That is a legally technical word. I said they are not bound by it. I am not a lawyer but I understand the law. There is nothing in the law that binds the President to the platform.

QUESTION: Senator Dole, do you feel that way? Is the President bound to the platform or not?

SENATOR DOLE: I will put it the way it is most comfortable with me. You know it is a platform of the Republican Party, and President Ford is the nominee, and I am the nominee for Vice President. We are running on that platform. But I want to make it clear, as the Vice President has, that it is a broad concept. It is a distillation of the best ideas and views of hundreds and hundreds of delegates who came together in open meetings, as compared to the Democrats' closed meetings. They drafted a platform, had it ratified and confirmed by the convention.

Now, the nominee is going to run on that platform. That doesn't mean it is his. He didn't send in the wording. In fact, there was discussion about White House interference during platform hearings. There wasn't any White house interference, nor was there dictation by the Reagan forces.

I was on the platform Committee. I know we stayed up until 2:00 or 3:00 in the morning, trying to work out differences, and we did. I didn't agree with everything that was done, but it is a compromise. We think it was a great effort. We can still have differences.

QUESTION: Let me ask you this, Senator. Why should the people of New York, particularly those who live in New York City, vote for a President who more or less turned his back on this town financially when it was in such deep trouble and only in the last minute came in?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: This is something I understand very well. New York City had a \$3 billion 500 million deficit that was an accumulation over a period of years of underestimating expenditures and overestimating income. And they were in a financial crisis and the State was, because one of the State organizations had not met short-term notes. Okay. The situation was very grave.

The President was deeply concerned that the city would go into bankruptcy and the Federal bankruptcy laws were such that it would be absolute chaos in New York. Therefore, he made a strong, tough statement.

It is just like if you had a heart attack, the doctor gives you a shock treatment to get your heart going. He gave New York City the shock treatment by being frank, tough, and saying, "Look, you have got to face your own problems. You have got to put your house in order."

Then when the city did and the State helped them, then he turned around and sent a message to Congress asking them to permit him to loan money to the city and recommended they change the bankruptcy laws so there would be a safe way, if they didn't do the things that were necessary.

As a result of what he has done, New York has taken the steps, the State has taken the steps, and the situation is being straightened out. The money has been loaned, repaid, and the whole thing is getting back on the track.

I think it is an extraordinary scenario, and the President deserves credit for his courage in making a very tough statement, which was politically unpopular, very rough, dangerous thing from a point of politics. From the point of view of good management, it was sound.

QUESTION: Carter reminds them of that "Drop Dead" headline. How are you going to counteract that tactic?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I think Senator Carter comes from Georgia. He doesn't know anything about how New York operates. This is a sophisticated town. That was a headline in the Daily News. For this you have got to understand this city.

QUESTION: He said if he is elected President, he will come sit down with Governor Carey and Mayor Beame and work out --

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I worked through five Presidents while I was governor, and I want to tell you, come to New York and sit down -- God forbid!

(Laughter)

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QUESTION: What does a man from Grand Rapids, Michigan, know about New York City?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: He knows you can't spend more money than you take in in revenue without going bankrupt. You don't have to be from Grand Rapids or New York. It applies to families, applies to cities, applies to States.

QUESTION: Doesn't a peanut farmer understand that also?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Well, he may understand it, but I don't know how he is going to do what he says he will do in New York. New York is doing what it has to do and getting its own house in order.

QUESTION: Senator Dole, would you support further action to help support New York beyond the loan action?

SENATOR DOLE: It depends on the state of New York and what they have done. So far so good. The track record has been pretty good. There are a lot of other things besides a direct loan that affect the people of New York City. There are the food stamp reform, urban renewal and some other programs New Yorkers are concerned about. A lot of people are concerned about Federal spending and restraints on spending and less interference from the government.

It is not based on how many dollars can you throw in one direction. People are concerned about this, but this isn't going to be the sole issue in the campaign. Ford has had years and years of experience on the national scene. He understands the city. Experience is a big difference in this campaign.

QUESTION: The State agency you referred to as having trouble, wasn't that the UDC?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Yes, Urban Development Corporation had short-term notes coming due. Malcolm Wilson was governor of the State at the time. He worked out a solution to the problem for the Housing Finance Agency to buy those notes. When Carey took office, he did not implement that plan. He let those notes default, thinking it might be useful politically to have an agency I had created go into default.

What he didn't understand was that if you have a moral obligation, responsibility for one and you default on it, you lose the credit and you undermine the confidence of the financial community for all of your operations in the financial field. What he did was destroy New York State's credit and New York City's credit. And that has been the heart of the problem.

QUESTION: Senator Dole, can I just follow up on this platform business one more time? You said that the ticket is going to run on that platform. The question really goes beyond November, what the platform means then. If you don't like the words now, your words -- for example,

the other day in Texas you said the President was wedded to this platform. When I asked Vice President Rockefeller about that last night, his words were, "No, he is not wedded."

SENATOR DOLE: I think that is perfectly logical. He is running on the platform, That doesn't mean if we are elected, as we will be, in November, and somebody sends up some legislation based on that platform, that he has got to agree to all the specifics in that legislation.

We are talking about broad concepts. We didn't write legislation in the platform. We wrote ideas and philosophy and what we believe would appeal to Republicans, Democrats and Independents, and we intend to pursue it. That doesn't mean we are going to have to draft legislation to put into the platform.

Our point has been that Governor Carter is now disavowing his own platform. He wrote it. He says, "I didn't mean this on this thing," or "I didn't mean this on that thing." It is a dangerous instrument.

QUESTION: Mr. Vice President, you endorsed Senator Buckley.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Yes, sir.

QUESTION: Other than the fact that he is a Democrat, --

THE VICE PRESIDENT: He happens to be Republican.

QUESTION: Other than the fact that he is a Democrat, what objections do you have to Pat Moynihan?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I didn't say I had any objection about Moynihan. I said I endorsed Mr. Buckley.

QUESTION: Do you have any difficulties with Mr. Moynihan's policies or proposals?

THE VECE PRESIDENT: I haven't studied them. I have been busy in this campaign and the primaries and now in the election, and I have not followed what he said in all of the campaign. All I do is see him and Bella Abzug going at each other, and didn't see that they were discussing issues, personally.

QUESTION: Senator Dole, just one last question. President Ford has said that he favors a State decision on the issue of abortion. Some people see that as a tremendous cop-out on the whole thing. Could you give us your views?

SENATOR DOLE: Well, I have said in my campaign in 1974 for the Senate I would support a constitutional amendment. Then we get into the question of whether there should be exceptions. Some people say no exceptions. I say there have to be some exceptions. I voted to cut off the use of Federal funds. Again, there may be some difference from the President's, but there is not that much difference. We believe that we are on the right track. And that is an issue for Mr. Carter. He is the one who has been all over the road.

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(AT 5:25 P.M. EDT)